Youth Empowerment Services

CANS: Parental Concerns & Comforts

Idaho youth have needs, and those needs can change. The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool measures those changes in need for youth. This sheet lists parental concerns about CANS, and corresponding comforts written by fellow parents to show how CANS helps individual youth and the team supporting them, parents included, develop a treatment plan specific to them.

Concerns

It's too long, the CANS is just a bunch of questions the clinician will be asking of me, and it feels like another hoop for the family to jump through.

A CANS every 90 days is excessive and takes too long. I feel like I must re-explore my family's trauma to "update" the CANS. The provider said this is just something I must do for the update.

The update to the CANS is taking an hour or more and the clinician informed me that this is just how it is.

My child has behavior problems that impact their safety and that of our family. Why are we looking at strengths? Let's fix what is wrong.

Strengths Video

This tool is just another way I'm going to be blamed for my child's behavior.

Comforts

Yes, it is a lot of items, and it is a vital step in the healing process. The CANS tool updates info to the team helping the youth. They need CANS to build consensus in the treatment plan. Regular assessment helps organize, communicate, and determine need/action levels.

Think of it like catching up with a friend you haven't spoken to in a bit. CANS confirms whether interventions work. Are changes needed?

"You don't have to ask a question to get an answer"

The updates should be only new information and/or changes. It can be done in 15 minutes or less.

Strengths have been proven to *improve* resilience, decrease needs (problem behaviors) and help interventions work better. It is as important to focus on improving and creating strengths as it is to decrease unwanted behaviors.

Parents are a valuable part of influencing youth and they are not the problem. Mental health issues are *not* the results of bad parenting.

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Concerns	Comforts
I am not the expert, so I should just do what the clinician says and answer their question. The therapist is the expert in identifying troubling behaviors with my child.	You are the expert on you and your family's needs and strengths. You and your child have just as much say in services desired, outcomes desired, and what it looks like to reach these. Experts Video
I just did a CANS with Liberty so I can access Medicaid-paid Respite, but now my provider wants to redo my child's CANS. The provider told me they HAVE to do another CANS even though we just did one a few weeks ago.	You are right. Communication between the provider and Liberty, along with a release to exchange information, ensures "One Kid One CANS." The providers can use the Liberty update information. You don't need another CANS in such a short time period.
My child's clinician stated my child is required to be present for the CANS. The trauma involved and/or issues within our family is triggering for my child. I am concerned about an escalation, but I don't have a choice.	You can start the appointment with your child and the clinician can address any pertinent questions with the child. After that, the child can leave the room so the parent and clinician can finish with the more 'touchy' conversation. You do have a choice.
We don't need others involved. There is no need to receive additional information for the CANS from the school or any other community-based supports.	People exhibit different needs and strengths depending on the environment they are in. Information from school and others can help add valuable context. The CANS is a collaborative tool that relies on multiple collateral contacts for the collaborative full picture process.
I thought the CANS was a collaborative and consensus-based tool and my voice was important in the process. I feel stuck with ratings I don't agree with. Also, things I stated were important were not rated.	Every voice, especially that of the family, is considered to gain consensus. If you are not satisfied, you can talk to the Clinician. And if you are still not satisfied, you can talk with the Clinician's supervisor and/or file a complaint with the Managed Care Organization.

Youth Empowerment Services

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH